(b) The consumption of Indian tea in the country and abroad is given below –

Consumption of tea in India and World

(Figures in Million Kgs.)

Year	Consumption of Indian tea in India	Consumption of Indian tea abroad (exports)
2005	757	199.05
2006	771	218.73
2007	786	178.75

(c) and (d) In terms of quantity, exports of Darjeeling tea from India have always been around 65 to 70% of the total production. The objectives behind "patenting" Darjeeling tea and giving it Geographical Indication status ensures that only genuine Darjeeling Tea is exported from the 87 gardens. Separate information on total quantity of exports of Darjeeling Tea is not available, as during the process teas are blended and exported in packaged form. In terms of specific consignments leaving the shores under Certificates of Origin, the year wise figures are follows:

Year	Quantity (Kgs)
2005	4,144,382
2006	4,340,415
2007	4,445,349

Effect of rupee appreciation on export

477. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 70 per cent of India's export trade is invoiced in dollar forcing many to believe that the export target of $160 billion for this year, was unlikely to be achieved;

(b) whether a large number of exporters has sought Government's financial assistance to enable them to invoice their export in Indian Rupees only instead of US Dollar; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to mitigate the effect of Rupee appreciation across the export sectors, make them internationally competitive and also enable them to achieve export targets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) It is a fact that majority of Indian exports are invoiced in US$. There is no restriction on invoicing of export contracts in Indian Rupees in terms of the Rules, Regulations, Notifications and Directions framed under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999. Further, in terms of Para 2.40 of the Foreign Trade Policy (September 1, 2004 to March 31, 2009), "all export contracts and invoices shall be denominated either in freely convertible currency or in Indian Rupees but export proceeds shall be realized in freely convertible currency. Government has taken a number of steps to mitigate the effect of Rupee Appreciation on

2007-08. Some of the steps taken in this regard include Enhancement of DEPB and Duty Drawback rates w.e.f. 1.4.2007, Subvention in the rate of interest provided on pre-and postshipment credit on the outstanding balances, reduction of ECGC Premia rates by 10%, making the Export Earners Foreign Currency (EEFC) account interest bearing, refund of major Service Tax linked to exports etc. However in last few months, Rupee has depreciated significantly.

Effect of Srilankan tea on Indian tea export

478. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that export of Indian tea has been decreasing rapidly due to superior quality tea production by Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the details of the loss suffered by India during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Union Government to improve the export quality of Indian tea for the international market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In order to improve the export quality of Indian tea for the international market, a Quality Upgradation and Product Diversification Scheme is being implemented by Tea Board during the Eleventh Plan period which outlay of Rs. 230 crores. Under this scheme financial assistance by way of subsidy is being extended to the needy tea gardens/factories for replacement of old and worn-out processing machineries, augmenting the processing capacity, creation of new facilities for production of orthodox, green and other specialty teas. Subsidy is also for value addition, setting up of modern blending/packaging units, usage of electronic devices for monitoring and processing of tea at different stages, obtaining quality assurance certification such as ISO/HACCP, Organic tea etc. for the setting up of new tea factories for manufacturing of orthodox teas and mini tea factories by the self help groups of small growers. During the Plan period it is also proposed to set up three quality testing laboratories in order to facilitate the exporters to ensure the export tea consignments conform to the quality standards.

Exports of labour intensive products

479. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been deceleration in exports of labour intensive products;

(b) if so, the remedial steps taken to check the decreasing trend in the export of labour intensive products; and

(c) the action taken to search new markets for export of labour intensive products?